



Master Plan Update 2019

Town of Abington
Planning Board

To the residents of the Town of Abington:

I would like to thank the members of the Abington Planning Board and particularly Chairman Wayne P. Smith and Planning Board Secretary Elizabeth Shea for their complete support and involvement in helping to make the Abington Master Plan Update 2019 possible. The other Planning Board members Vice Chairman, Bruce G. Hughes, Jeffrey Rangel, Robert Soper and Richard J. Collins, II, also deserve special recognition for their service and in their efforts in helping to make the Plan Update meaningful and relevant to the needs and opportunities facing the Town of Abington presently and in the future. The Master Plan Update 2019 is a targeted assessment of the changes that have taken place over the ten years in Land Use, Cultural and Natural Resources, and Watershed Protection Elements of the Plan since 2009. These portions of the update were accomplished under an agreement with the Conway School of Landscape Design and Planning by Graduate Students Amanda Hawes and Eric Giordano who did a masterful job. Excerpts of the Conway report are included here. In addition, the Plan Update includes an Economic Supplement that restates the goals and strategy for industrial and commercial development, affordable housing and preservation of parks and open space.

The Master Plan Update was prepared with the support and guidance of the Abington Planning Board, Town Manager Rick LaFond, the Board of Selectmen and with the cooperation of the Town Department heads and the boards and commissions of the Town

Respectfully,

Daniel M. Crane, MCP

Planner Consultant

TABLE OF CONTENTS

PAGE

THE MASTER PLAN UPDATE 2019

LAND USE ELEMENT

NATURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES ELEMENT

WATERSHED PROTECTION ELEMENT

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT SUPPLEMENT

THE MASTER PLAN UPDATE 2019

The primary responsibility of the Abington Planning Board under Massachusetts General Law, Chapter 41, Section 81D, as with all cities and towns is to prepare a Comprehensive Master Plan to guide the growth and development of the community. The Town of Abington Master Plan, was comprehensively updated in 2009. The Master Plan consists of several important Elements, including, strategies for accomplishing goals for Land Use, Open Space and Recreation, Economic Development, Circulation and Transportation, Housing, Historic and Cultural Resources and Public Facilities. The Land Use Element of the Master Plan serves as the basis for the Zoning By-Law and Map and the Town uses the Master Plan as the public policy statement to guide future growth and development and in decision making for public improvements. The Planning Process is a continuing effort for the Planning Board and the Board seeks to keep the Master Plan relevant to changes and current conditions through periodic review and updates.

The Planning Board recently completed updates of the Land Use and Cultural Resources Element of the Master Plan. This update was completed earlier this year with assistance of the Conway School of Landscape Architecture and Planning. In addition, this update includes an Economic Development Supplement to the Master Plan. The Supplement is a current statement of the Master Plan's Goals and Strategies for Economic Development, Open Space, Recreation and Affordable Housing.

These Elements of the Master Plan provide a long-term vision for the community and a clear set of Goals and Objectives for the Town to guide future growth and development. The Update offers strategies for achieving the Goals of the Plan and actions to guide town officials, boards and commissions and citizens of the way to accomplish these Goals.

A Town must always balance competing interests where there may be pressure to carry out programs+ that are occasionally at odds with one another and there are limited resources to address all municipal needs. A Master Plan can help establish priorities and resolve conflicts by forming a unified vision.

MASTER PLAN LEGISLATION

Massachusetts General Law, Chapter 41, Section 81D outlines what is required in a Master Plan. The Master Plan is a document that consists of text, maps, and illustrations that serves as the basis for municipal decision-making regarding the long-term physical development of a community. The document must be internally consistent between its policies, forecasts, and standards and consists of *at least* the following nine elements:

GOALS AND VISION STATEMENT which identifies the goals and vision of the municipality for its future growth and development. Each community shall conduct an interactive public process, to determine community values and goals and to identify patterns of development that will be consistent with these goals.

LAND USE PLAN element which identifies present land use and designates the proposed distribution, location, and inter-relationship of public and private land uses. This element shall relate the proposed standards of population density and building intensity to the capacity of land available or planned facilities and services. A land use plan map illustrating the land use policies of the municipality shall be included.

HOUSING element which identifies and analyzes existing and forecasted housing needs and objectives including programs for the preservation, improvement and development of housing. This element shall identify policies and strategies to provide a balance of local housing opportunities for all citizens.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT element which identifies policies and strategies for the expansion or stabilization of the local economic base and the promotion of employment opportunities.

NATURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES element which provides an inventory of the significant natural, cultural, and historic resource areas of the municipality, and policies and strategies for the protection and management of such areas.

OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION element which provides an inventory of recreational resources and open space areas of the municipality, and policies and strategies for the management and protection of such resources and areas.

SERVICES AND FACILITIES element which identifies and analyzes existing and forecasted needs for facilities and services used by the public.

CIRCULATION element which provides an inventory of existing and proposed circulation and transportation systems.

IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAM element which defines and schedules the specific municipal actions necessary to achieve the objectives of each element of the master or study plan. Scheduled expansion or replacement of public facilities or circulation system components and the anticipated costs and revenues associated with the accomplishment of such activities shall be detailed in this element. This element shall specify the process by which the municipality's regulatory structures shall be amended so as to be consistent with the master plan.

Communities can supplement these required sections with elements of particular relevance to the town. This master plan includes a WATERSHED PROTECTION section, which might be required in future plans, and details strategies to ensure the health of the town's water bodies and drinking water supply.

LAND USE ELEMENT

Goals:

Guide commercial and residential growth in a manner that minimizes impact on natural resources and recreation opportunities, contributes to the tax base, provides a variety of housing and employment opportunities, and makes efficient use of public services.

Encourage development and redevelopment in the two downtowns of Abington Center and North Abington Center, including attracting businesses that provide desired amenities, mixing uses in existing and new buildings, and concentrating new housing around the downtowns to foster a more vibrant and walkable community.

Strategy 1: Encourage development and redevelopment in and around Abington Center and North Abington Center	Responsible Parties	Time Frame
Action 1.1: Work with residents who live near Abington Center and North Abington Center to determine new zoning regulations that will allow higher density residential, commercial, and mixed-use development and more multi-family housing. Zoning changes can be met with resistance from residents who do not want their neighborhood to change. Undertaking an extensive process of community involvement, discussing the potential pros and cons of the changes, and creating a shared vision offers the best chance that outcomes will please all parties.	PB	Medium Term
Action 1.2: Explore the suitability of creating Smart Growth Overlay Districts that extend beyond the current Central Business Districts that will make the town eligible for Commonwealth funding under Chapter 40R for adopting zoning that encourages denser development and more housing options, including affordable housing. Several towns in Massachusetts have used this act to help them on their path to smart growth (CHAPA).	PB	Short Term
Action 1.3: Encourage infill commercial, residential, and multi-use development along main commercial strips in downtown centers. The larger gaps between structures along these streets are opportunities for new businesses, housing, and other mixed-use development. High priority infill areas should be determined and development should be encouraged there. This can also improve the look of the	PB, BC, HA	Ongoing

downtown street and make it feel like a unique place in town.		
Action 1.4: Identify “underutilized” and vacant sites in or near downtown centers. Once identified, determine desired redevelopment and seek partners.	PB	Medium Term
Action 1.5: Assess parking availability in the downtown centers and decrease minimum requirements where possible to lessen barriers for new economic development.	PB, Board	Short Term
Action 1.6: Use Low Impact Development and Green Infrastructure to limit or offset potentially negative environmental effects of new development.		Ongoing
Strategy 2: Improve appearance and public amenities in North Abington Center and Abington Center		
Action 2.1: Form a downtown placemaking committee to direct improvements and look into creating a downtown Business Improvement District (BID) to generate funds. A committee of residents and business owners could convene and envision desired landscape and placemaking improvements. In a Business Improvement District, the business owners make financial contributions that improve the area that they collectively share.	PB, BC	Short Term
Action 2.2: Improve the public spaces in the downtowns, especially along the main corridors, with street trees and other vegetation, gathering spaces, seating, wider sidewalks, and other public amenities where possible. Increasing density is one piece of the puzzle in fostering a more active downtown area, but another key piece is making it a pleasing and comfortable place to be. This can have a great effect on businesses as well by attracting a larger consumer base.	PB	Medium Term
Action 2.3: Improve pedestrian livability in downtowns. Walkability is not only about providing short distances between points of interest. It’s equally about designing	PB	Medium Term

and fostering an enjoyable and safe walking experience.		
Action 2.4: Work with the community to determine visual preferences and create downtown design guidelines. Consider developing form-based codes based on these preferences. Form based codes, as the name suggests, focus on regulating the physical form of the built environment instead of the uses contained therein, encouraging a desired look and character for an area.	PB	Medium Term
Action 2.5: Enhance gateway locations. In North Abington Center, the intersection of Adams Street (Route 58) and Route 139, could be improved to provide a more attractive and inviting entrance to the main corridor. In Abington Center, the intersections where Brockton Avenue meets Rockland Avenue and where Route 123 meets Washington Street are locations where landscaping improvements and placemaking features would enhance the experience of entering the downtown district.	PB	Short Term
Action 2.6: Research the feasibility and cost of burying utility wires.	PB	Short Term
Action 2.7: Schedule events in the downtowns. Events both draw people to the downtowns and begin to create a sense of community centered around these districts.	CP	Ongoing
Action 2.8: Create signs and wayfinding from downtown centers to nearby recreation areas. Signs can help orient visitors to these areas and also create a sense of cohesion between points of interest. For example, the close-by rail trail is a great asset for North Abington Center and clear wayfinding to and from it will bolster this connection.	PB, PR	Short Term
Action 2.9: Apply for community improvement grants such as the “Our Town” grant from the National Endowment for the Arts. This grant supports projects that “integrate arts, culture, and design activities into efforts that strengthen communities by advancing local economic, physical, and/or social outcomes.”	PB	Short Term, CP

Action 2.10: Enlist the help of the Arts Council to contribute public installation pieces made by Abington residents.	PB, AC	Short Term

NATURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES ELEMENT

Goals:

Lead by example for surrounding communities in terms of promoting stewardship of ecologically valuable areas and endeavor to protect that land in perpetuity.

Improve park spaces where necessary and expand recreational access to natural areas where access will not negatively impact habitat and other ecological resources.

Increase community connectedness by creating safe walkability and bikeability between open spaces, the downtowns, and the middle/high school and town offices. Understand the transportation needs of all groups within the community and endeavor to make these destinations in town reachable by everyone.

Strategy 1: Protect Ecologically Valuable Open Space and Overall “Woodland Feel” of the Community	Responsible Parties	Timeline
Action 1.1: Consider transferring Town-owned properties within BioMap2 priority protection areas that don’t have a level of protection to conservation in perpetuity.	PB, ConCom	Short Term
Action 1.2: Prioritize the preservation of at least a portion of the area north of Chestnut Street through conservation easements. Work with landowners to try to preserve Abington’s part of the existing corridor that can help to protect the ecological integrity of the area. Where possible, the Town should consider expanding upon its land holdings in this area and protect them in perpetuity.	PB, ConCom	Medium Term
Action 1.3: Protect the BioMap2 Core Habitat and Critical Natural Landscape within the groundwater recharge area by implementing stricter building requirements than are currently in place, in order to reduce runoff, further minimize impervious surface, and reduce environmental impact. Consider working with landowners to put conservation easements in place to further protect portions of that land and further investigate the potential effects new construction in this area would have on existing habitat and wildlife.	PB, ConCom	Medium Term

Action 1.4: Work with the Conservation Commission and Union Point housing development in Weymouth to assess whether planned commercial development in the northeast corner of Abington will still allow for movement of species and water within that BioMap2 priority protection land. Look for ways to preserve the ecological integrity of the whole swath of BioMap2 habitat as much as possible.	PB, ConCom	Medium Term
Action 1.5: Identify forested areas within Abington that contribute to the overall town feel and “woodland” character that residents have expressed is valuable to them. Assess what the town would look like if these areas were cleared for development to decide what to seek to preserve through Town acquisition.	PB, ConCom	Short Term
Action 1.6: Consider town-wide tree planting initiatives to further encourage homeowners to plant shade trees or, on larger parcels, to reforest a portion of their properties.	PB, ConCom, PR	Ongoing
Strategy 2: Improve recreation spaces where needed and acquire or expand upon open space where it is possible and desirable for the community		
Action 2.1: Work with the Town of Brockton to assess the possibility of expanding existing trails in the Beaver Brook Conservation Area to create access from the Abington side, potentially through already town-owned land such as the Linwood Street Conservation Area and/or Diane Circle. First assess whether trail expansion and/ or building boardwalks would have an adverse effect on wetlands. Also work with the Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) to better connect Beaver Brook Conservation and Ames Nowell State Park through creating more trails. Any new trail heads should have clear signage and the Town should further assess options for parking at the trail heads.	PB, ConCom	Medium Term
Action 2.2: Having identified the importance of Ames	PB, ConCom, PR	Short Term

Nowell as part of a larger area of BioMap2 Core Habitat and Critical Natural Landscape, use this as a further argument to encourage the DCR to better prioritize maintenance of Ames Nowell. Since Cleveland Pond is in the state park, the DCR is also responsible for handling the impairment caused by invasive species in the pond (discussed in Watershed Protection on page 73) and the Town should follow up on this and make sure action is being taken within a reasonable time frame.		
Action 2.3: Explore the possibility of expanding trails north of Ames Nowell into the unprotected area north of Chestnut Street via trail easements and use of current Town-owned land. Study the potential and environmental impacts of adding trails. Investigate the possibility of adding a crosswalk on Chestnut Street to improve pedestrian safety and access as well as a parking area and trail head.	PB, ConCom, PR	Short Term
Strategy 3: Improve Town Connectivity		
Action 3.1: Place informational and way-finding signs at important destinations in town, such as Island Grove Park or the end of the Rail Trail, to inform people about the location and amenities of surrounding destinations, as well as inform them about where they are and why that place is important to Abington.	PR	Short Term
Action 3.2: Create a connection, via Charles Street and the wooded path at the end of it, between Griffin's Dairy Farm and the Hanover Rail Trail. Add signs at the rail trail and Griffin's Dairy to direct people. Discuss with Charles Street residents the possibility of adding a sidewalk and bike lane down Charles Street to accommodate pedestrians and bikers.	PB, PR	Medium Term
Action 3.2: Investigate the possibility of creating a multi-use path between the high school/middle school and Town offices at the end of Glineiwicz Way and the neighborhoods to the west via an existing Town-owned sewer easement. Assess the level of safety for those using the path and make sure would be well lit. Conduct	PB, PR	Short Term

an impact analysis concerning the adjacent wetlands and consider implementing green infrastructure or porous paving to control runoff along the path.		
-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	--	--

WATERSHED PROTECTION ELEMENT

Goals:

Improve the health of Abington's water bodies, with particular attention toward offsetting the impact of development.

Take steps to ensure continued availability of clean drinking water.

Educate the community on the importance of wetlands and watershed protection.

Strategy 1: Protect the upper Shumatuscacant sub-watershed.	Responsible Parties	Time Frame
Action 1.1: Create a network of green infrastructure in the form of bioswales, rain gardens, porous pavement, and green roofs, where suitable, to encourage greater treatment and infiltration of stormwater.	PB, ConCom, DPW	Long Term
Action 1.2: Promote and/or require Low Impact Development throughout the upper Shumatuscacant sub-watershed to ensure new development has the least negative environmental impact possible.	PB, DPW	Ongoing
Action 1.3: Review general and zoning by-laws to make sure that limitations on the storage or disposal of hazardous materials are in line with best practices recommended by the state.	PB	Ongoing
Strategy 2: Protect the lower Shumatuscacant sub-watershed.		
Action 2.1: Update watershed protection overlay regulations to ensure a maximum 10% impervious surface cover in this sub-basin.	PB	Short Term
Action 2.2: Discourage development within the watershed protection overlay district especially within the floodplain.	PB	Ongoing
Action 2.3: Create new green infrastructure, especially in	PB, DPW	Medium Term

the portions of Abington Center and Route 18 that are within this sub-basin.		
Action 2.4: Review watershed protection overlay regulations to make sure that the restrictions to the storage or disposal of hazardous materials are in line with best practices recommended by the state.	PB	Short Term
Strategy 3: Ensure high water quality in drinking water supply reservoirs outside of Abington.		
Action 3.1: Work with the Towns of Rockland and Pembroke and the Abington Rockland Joint Water Works to ensure watersheds are well-managed.	BS, ARJWW	Ongoing
Strategy 4: Educate Abington residents on ways to improve water quality.		
Action 4.1: Create informational materials and hold workshops on how residents can catch and infiltrate stormwater in their yards.	ConCom, W	Short Term
Action 4.2: Explore ways to incentivize residents to decrease the impervious surface on their properties and/or implement green infrastructure like rain gardens.	PB, DPW	Ongoing
Action 4.3: Select a visible parcel of Town-owned land to install some green infrastructure demonstrations, making it an educational space.	PB, DPW, ConCom, PR	Medium Term
Strategy 5: Look to the future and assess town needs		
Action 5.1: Conduct a study to assess the future demand on the public drinking water supply as the town population grows.	W	Short Term

Action 5.2: Identify potential future threats to the water supply, like periods of drought and degradation of stormwater infrastructure as well as increased severity of storms as a result of climate change.	PB, W	Ongoing
----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	-------	---------

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT SUPPLEMENT

This Economic Development Supplement to the Abington Master Plan is designed to meet the requirements of MGL, Sec.81D (9), and restates the goals and strategy of the Town for industrial and commercial development, affordable housing, and preservation of parks and open space. In the ten years since the Master Plan was updated much has been accomplished in implementing and advancing certain goals and objectives of the Plan particularly with respect to Open Space preservation and acquisition; the construction of Community Facilities including the new High School and other appurtenances. However, the Town has had only moderate success in its Economic Development Program efforts to increase local job creation and commercial and business tax revenues; and, add to the number of affordable housing units in the community.

Industrial and Commercial Development Goals

The Goals for Economic Development as expressed in the Master Plan are as follows:

- The Town should continue its efforts to retain and attract business; maximize local job creation and retention; and, increase local tax revenues through use of the Economic Development Incentive Program (EDIP).
- The Town should seek to increase and diversify the commercial tax base of the town by seeking to attract additional retail, office, light manufacturing and warehouse development while retaining existing businesses.
- Increase efforts to promote the revitalization of the North Abington and Abington Business Districts.
- **Concentrate future commercial development in order to increase convenience, minimize auto trips, provide opportunity for walking and bicycling to destination, and protect existing neighborhoods from the intrusion of incompatible uses.⁶**

Abington is a designated Economic Target Area (ETA) by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and it has the ability to offer tax incentives to prospective new firms and employers who locate in the community through the State's Economic Development Incentive Program (EDIP). The Town was successful in using this Program to retain Cape Cod Lumber; a major business in Abington. But this singular positive event is but a step in the right direction. A more aggressive approach to business development and job creation is needed if the Town is to maintain a good balance in its tax base and revenue sources in the future. More must and can be done by being more pro-active in engaging local businesses to expand and by enticing prospective businesses and entrepreneurs to locate in Abington. The Town as a ETA can use tax incentives to encourage new business development and business expansion through the Massachusetts Tax Incentive Financing (TIF) program.

However, little progress has been made toward reaching Master Plan Goals for Economic Development. Business development and job creation have been relatively low priority for Abington with the hope that positive results will result over time. This laissez faire approach to industrial and commercial development will not obtain the necessary results if the Town is to achieve a balance of development and in its tax base. Abington can launch a successful economic development program by engaging a qualified Planner; who among other responsibilities would be to work with local property owners, businesses and prospective entrepreneurs to locate in the community. Many communities have experienced success in this regard by employing a Town Planner with knowledge, experience and expertise in business development.

A Planner with familiarity in State financing and incentive programs; with contacts in Development organizations i.e., South Eastern Economic Development (SEED) Corporation, Mass Office of Business Development (MOBD), Metro South Chamber of Commerce, Regional Economic Development Organization (RELO), for programs and resources that may be required to successfully package a development. These contacts and data would be of inestimable value in Town efforts to attract prospective firms and entrepreneurs to the community; to utilize vacant and abandoned buildings; and, increase tax revenues. The Planner can also re-energize the Abington Business Council to work with existing businesses in the community that want to expand or increase their business. Of importance would be to identify impediments to industrial and commercial development or business expansion such as parking issues, loading or other infrastructure problems that are within the ability of the Town to correct.

Old Colony Planning Council indicates in its most recent Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS); that in 2011 Massachusetts authorized the creation of Regional Economic Development Organizations (REDOs). The REDO organizations are funded through the Massachusetts Office of Business Development (MOBD). They are partnerships between businesses, local government and the State to provide resources to grow and retain existing businesses, support local efforts to attract new businesses and provide an efficient and consistent response to businesses seeking assistance. The Metro South Chamber of Commerce in Brockton referenced previously has been designated as the REDO for the area including Abington. The Metro South Chamber has already reached out to the town to suggest a site or sites that would be appropriate for development. The Town needs to work with the REDO and others to identify specific sites and buildings for industrial and commercial uses and projects, It is a necessary requisite to identify land sites and/or buildings that the community deems as priority development sites per Chapter 43D as a viable Massachusetts Growth District. This requires follow up by the Town and is another task that a Planner might fulfill

There remains considerable interest in revitalizing North Abington Center and Abington Center to be more active, attractive, walkable and social meeting areas. But this goal will not be realized unless a concerted effort is made by the Town to rally and coordinate the efforts necessary to bring this interest into fruition. It will require an intense proactive program focused on encouraging business expansion and new development. The

revitalization of these centers must involve significant investment by the Town in providing infrastructure improvements that will encourage and support private investment. Efforts must be directed toward attracting businesses that provide opportunity for individuals and groups to congregate in a welcoming environment. Ideally, a mixing of uses in existing and new buildings and concentrating new housing around these historic town centers will foster a more vibrant and walkable community. Forming a Business Improvement District (BID) and organizing a committee of property owners, business owners and interested citizens in each center would provide a mechanism for these groups to plan and visualize desired streetscape and other improvements necessary for the revitalization effort. Through a Business Improvement District, the business/property owners can make financial contributions to improve the area that they collectively share.

Affordable Housing

The primary goal for Housing in Abington is to continue to employ policies and strategies to achieve a balance of housing opportunities for all citizens. Important to this goal is to develop an increased supply of affordable and subsidized housing in Abington and to support these efforts elsewhere in the South Shore area. As of this writing the number of subsidized housing units in Abington is 485 or 7.62 percent of the total housing units. Mass General Laws Chapter 40B mandates that each municipality maintain a minimum of 10% of its housing stock in the affordable category to avoid the imposition of housing developments that do not conform to the Town's zoning bylaws. Being short of the ten percent threshold of low and moderate income housing units means the Town has less control over the type and character of future low and moderate housing projects that may be proposed under Chapter 40B. It is important that the Town of Abington continue to try to reach this important goal.

Establish programs that support local housing initiatives including: down payment assistance, closing cost and rental assistance programs by leveraging funding and administrative resources through funding available from the Community Preservation Act.

Support the Abington Housing Authority in developing additional affordable housing for low-income families, the elderly and persons with disabilities. Addition of approximately forty units of subsidized senior housing by the Abington Housing Authority. There is currently a waiting list of over 200-- The waiting period for an elderly housing unit is over 2 years for Abington residents.

Establish a first-time home buyer program so that town residents and employees can become homeowners in our community.

Underutilized town owned land and other surplus properties should be considered for affordable housing needs which could help support such development.

Ensure that new affordable community housing is compatible with open space planning and existing zoning laws.

Parks and Open Space

In 2014 the Abington Planning Board prepared an Open Space and Recreation Plan that effectively updated this element of the Town's Master Plan. The Open Space Plan should be used by the Town as a guide to; improve its parks and recreation facilities; and, to provide direction to preserve, protect, enhance and expand open space and recreation resources in the community. It is also significant to note that the accomplishment of State Division of Conservation Services (DCS) certification of the Plan it makes the Town of Abington eligible for state aid under the Local Acquisition for Natural Diversity (LAND) and Parkland Acquisitions; and, the Renovations for Communities (PARC) Programs.

The adoption of the Community Preservation Act (CPA) in 2015 and subsequent approval of its implementation at the town election in April 2016 was a major accomplishment for Abington. CPA funding will enable the town to accomplish the goals and objectives set forth in the Town's Open Space and Recreation Plan with the resources that are generated. The town approved a surcharge rate of 1.5 per cent on its property tax to fund implementation of CPA projects. The current yield with matching funds from the State generates an amount of over \$400,000 per year to fund projects. CPA funds must be spent annually; or set aside for future spending. Each year, ten percent (10%) or roughly forty thousand dollars (\$40,000) of CPA funding must be used or set aside for Open Space acquisition or conservation; and, another ten percent (10%) used for community housing.

It is important to indicate here to restate the Goals for Open Space and Recreation as Follows:

- Preserve and protect and expand the Town's open spaces and improve access to these areas.
- Increase the number and quality of active recreation areas and facilities.
- Protect watersheds, ground water resources and other natural resources.
- Increase community connections by creating safe walking and biking access between open spaces, the downtowns, and the middle/high school and town offices. Understand the transportation needs of all groups within the community and endeavor to make these destinations accessible to the public.

The Open Space Plan includes a listing of priorities for projects that should be used by the Boards and Commissions of the Town as a guide of its efforts and for the Community Preservation Act Committee to reference in determining projects to receive funding.

The listing in order of priority are:

1. Restoration and maintenance of the Wilson Memorial Bridge and Arch
2. Increase Conservation Holdings
3. Protect Water Resources and other Resources
4. Support efforts to Expand/Improve Ames Nowell State Park
5. Improve access to the Walnut Street Conservation Area
6. Develop scattered Community Gardens
7. Encourage new, small scale agriculture
8. Improve access to Reilly Field from the west
9. Educate the public on Water Quality Protection measures
10. Extend the Lower Shumatuscant River Trail System